

REMARKS

This paper is in response to the Office Action of May 19, 2004. The due date for response extends to August 19, 2004.

This Amendment cancels claims 4 through 6, 9 and 16. It amends claims 1, 7, 8, 10, 14, 15, 17 and 20.

The rejection of claims 7, 14 and 20 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph is noted. The Examiner's attention is directed to pages 16, line 18 through page 18, line 6 of the Detailed Specification wherein the process of achieving optimum placement and utilization of the voltage tolerant circuit of the present invention using an I/O generator is described. The claims have been modified to track the specific language used in the specification at the cited portions of the text. Applicant believes that in light of the detailed specification, these claims are not indefinite. As claims 14 and 20 are dependant on allowable base claims, allowance of these claims is requested. Applicants also believe that claim 1 as amended is allowable. As claim 7 depends on it, it should also be allowable.

Wert, U.S. patent No. 6,271,703 (Wert) describes an overvoltage protection circuit similar to the present invention but with important schematic and operational differences. Although n-channel pass gate transistor 500 and p-supply p-channel transistor 502 are similarly located and coupled as transistors 200a and 220d, respectively (Wert, Fig. 4), transistors 502 and 504 in the present invention protect transistor 506 more effectively from overvoltages than does transistor 220e in Wert. In certain situations, Wert will allow an overvoltage to appear across transistor 220d. Transistors 502 and 504 limit the voltage across transistor 506 to a lower level, protecting it more effectively than the circuit shown in Wert.

The Examiner has noted this difference by indicating that claims 9, 10, 16 and 17 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has incorporated the limitations of claim 9 into claim 8 and corrected the dependency of claim 10 as appropriate. As claims 10 through 14 depend from an allowed base claim, they should all now be considered allowable.


Claim 15 has been amended to include the limitation of claim 16. The dependency of claim 17 has been amended so it depends on an allowable base claim. As claims 17 through 20 depend from an allowed base claim, they should all now be considered allowable.

Claim 1 has been amended so that the operational effect of transistors 502 and 504 are incorporated into the language of the claim. With these clarifications, applicant believes that claim 1 and its dependent claims 2, 3 and 7 should now be allowable.

Review of this Amendment and allowance of pending claims 1 through 3, 7, 8, 10 through 15, and 17 through 20 are respectfully requested.

If the Examiner has any questions concerning the present amendment, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at (408) 749-6903. If any other fees are due in connection with filing this amendment, the Commissioner is also authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-0805 (Order No. ARTCP042). A duplicate copy of the transmittal is enclosed for this purpose.

Respectfully submitted,
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